



www.careersinghana.com

Email : info@careersinghana.com

Tel: +233 245649846

Chiropractor Careers, Jobs, and Employment Information

Chiropractor Career Overview and Description

Chiropractors work with patients to diagnose and treat problems with the spine, nervous, muscular, and skeletal systems to help other body systems function properly. They believe that problems within these particular body systems lower a person's resistance to disease and affects how the rest of the body works. Chiropractors also believe that body pain is caused by skeletal imbalance and vertebral dysfunction, affecting the nervous system and altering the rest of the body's functions. Chiropractors are also referred to as chiropractic physicians or doctors of chiropractic and may specialize in areas such as pediatrics, diagnostic imaging, sports injuries, nutrition, orthopedics, internal disorders, and neurology.

Using a holistic treatment approach, chiropractors emphasize the importance of overall wellness and acknowledge that various factors affect health such as diet, heredity, environment, rest, and exercise. They encourage patients to improve their lifestyles by adjusting sleep, eating, and exercise patterns. Without using surgery or drugs, chiropractors treat patients by focusing on the natural healing and recovery abilities of the body.

In order to diagnose a patient, a chiropractor first reviews the patient's medical history, conducts laboratory tests, and performs orthopedic, physical, and neurological examinations. Because the spine is strongly emphasized, x-rays are an essential tool along with postural and spinal analysis.

Chiropractors adjust patients' spinal columns when they are diagnosed with problems involving the musculoskeletal structures. This is accomplished through use of ultrasound, water, massage, light, heat, and electric therapy. Devices such as braces, straps, and braces are sometimes used.

Chiropractors working in large offices delegate administrative responsibilities to assistants or office managers. Those working independently or in small practices often perform these tasks themselves. They are responsible for record keeping, acquiring a patient base, and hiring employees.

In 2002, there were close to 49,000 chiropractors working in the U.S. While the majority works independently, some are employed by other chiropractors or work in a group practice. Others work in clinics or hospitals, teach, or perform research at institutions.

Chiropractor Training and Job Qualifications

Licensure is required for a chiropractor to practice in all 50 states. Although each state demands different examination and educational requirements to obtain a license, agreements have been made between some states to recognize each other's requirements for licensure.

For a license, State boards generally require the minimum of a 2-year undergraduate degree. Many states now require a bachelor's degree. In addition to a degree, chiropractors must graduate from a 4-year accredited chiropractic college.

The National Board of Chiropractic Examiners gives a four-part test that most State boards require to be passed for licensure. Some States require supplemental examinations for licensure.

Continuing education is necessary to maintain a license. Programs are often offered by accredited chiropractic programs and chiropractic associations. Chiropractors can attend specialty councils while continuing their education to obtain "diplomate" certification, or clinical specialty certification in sports injuries, internal disorders, nutrition, orthopedics, diagnostic imaging, neurology, occupational and industrial health, and thermography.

Although a bachelor's degree isn't yet required, applicants to a chiropractic institution or program must have a minimum of 90 credit hours of undergraduate study. These credit hours must include courses in physics, organic and inorganic chemistry, psychology, biology, humanities, and English. Prechiropractic study and also a bachelor's degree program are offered by several chiropractic colleges. As of 2003, the Council on Chiropractic Education recognized the accreditation of 2 chiropractic institutions and 16 chiropractic programs in the U.S.

The majority of chiropractic programs in the first two years focus on laboratory work in science fields including pathology, public health, anatomy, biochemistry, microbiology, and physiology. Clinical experience in geriatrics, neurology, nutrition, orthopedics, physiotherapy, and in laboratory and physical diagnosis, along with courses in spinal adjustment and manipulation are provided in the final two years of a program. After four years of study, the degree obtained from chiropractic institutions and programs is Doctor of Chiropractic.

Extreme endurance or strength is not needed to become a chiropractor. Instead, good observation is required to locate physical problems and manual dexterity is needed to give adjustments. Because chiropractors work with people, it is important that they are understanding, empathetic, and love helping others. A newly licensed chiropractor has the option of purchasing an established practice, starting his own practice, going into partnership with another chiropractor, or finding a salary position in a group practice, healthcare facility, or with another chiropractor.

Chiropractor Job and Employment Opportunities

Job prospects are expected to be good for persons who enter the practice of chiropractic. Employment of chiropractors is expected to grow faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2012 as consumer demand for alternative healthcare grows. Chiropractors

emphasize the importance of healthy lifestyles and do not prescribe drugs or perform surgery. As a result, chiropractic care is appealing to many health-conscious Americans.

Because there is a growing demand for alternative healthcare, chiropractic practice is expected to grow through 2012. The changing attitudes of the public concerning alternative healthcare practice have helped chiropractic treatment to become more widely accepted. The demand for treatment is also increasing as the older population grows rapidly and their bodies begin experience more problems.

When communities are further educated about chiropractic treatment, the demand for chiropractors increases. The availability of insurance coverage also affects the public's demand for treatment; an increasing number of insurance companies are beginning to offer coverage for chiropractic treatment. Turnover in the chiropractic industry is very low. Replacing a chiropractor usually only occurs after one retires. Because of this, it is best to begin a new practice in an area where there are few chiropractors already working.

Historical Earnings Information

In 2002, the average annual income for chiropractors on salary was \$65,330. Salaried chiropractors generally receive a smaller income than those who are self-employed. When including both types of income in 2000, the average was around \$81,000. Income depends on the size of practice, therefore usually increases over time for a chiropractor. Location as well as individual qualities and accomplishments of each chiropractor also influence pay.